

Message Text

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 01 COLOMB 00382 311231Z
ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 TRSE-00 OMB-01 SSC-01 CIAE-00 DODE-00
PM-04 H-01 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01
SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 /058 W
-----311355Z 122056 /46
R 311057Z JAN 77
FM AMEMBASSY COLOMBO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6632

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE COLOMBO 0382

E.O. 11652:NA
TAGS: PINT, CE, PINR
SUBJECT: UNITED NATIONAL PARTY SELECTS ELECTION COMMITTEE/SHADOW
CABINET

1. SUMMARY. OPPOSITION UNITED NATIONAL PARTY (UNP) LEADER
J.R. JAYEQARDENE, IN A SURPRISE MOVE, ASKED A MEETING OF
PARTY M.P.'S AND ELECTORAL ORGANIZERS JANUARY 29 TO CHOOSE
FROM AMONG THEMSELVES A TEN-MEMBER ELECTION COMMITTEE.
THE TEN SELECTED, IT IS BEING SUGGESTED, MAKE UP THE UNP
"SHADOW CABINET." HOWEVER, IF THE UNP SHOULD COME TO POWER,
J.R. WILL NO DOUBT EXERCISE HIS PREROGATIVE TO
CHOOSE MINISTERS WITH WHOM HE FEELS COMFORTABLE, POSSIBLY
INCLUDING SOME OF THE FOUR-EX-MINISTERS PASSED OVER IN THIS LIST.
END SUMMARY.

2. UNP LEADER J.R. JAYEWARDENE AT A JANUARY 29 MEETING
OF PARTY CANDIDATES FOR THE UPCOMING ELECTIONS ASKED THEM
TO CHOOSE A TEN-MEMBER COMMITTEE TO COORDINATE PREPARATIONS
FOR THE CAMPAIGN. THE PRESS QUICKLY SUGGESTED THAT THIS
WAS THE PARTY'S "SHADOW CABINET"; INSTEAD IT IS MORE AN
INDICATION OF WHO HAS THE RESPECT AND THE SUPPORT OF
THE POTENTIAL UNP PARLIAMENTARY PARTY.

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 02 COLOMB 00382 311231Z

3. THE TEN, WITH THE NUMBER OF VOTES THEY RECEIVED IN
PARENTHESES, ARE: R. PREMADASA, COLOMBO CENTRAL M.P.
(118), GAMINI DISSANAYAKE, NUWARA ELIYA M.P. (108),
A.C. S. HAMEED, AKURANA M.P. (94), K.W. DEVANAYAGAM,
KALKUDAH M.P. (75), GAMINI JAYASURIYA, FORMER M.P.
AND HOMAGAMA ORGANIZER (70), RONNIE DE MEL, DEVINUWARA
M.P. (65) E. L. SENANAYAKE, KANDY M.P. (65), LALITH

ATHULATHMUDALI, RATMALANA ORGANIZER (62), CYRIL
MATHEW, FORMER M.P. AND KELANIYA ORGANIZER (40), AND
E.L. B. HURULLE FORMER M.P. AND HOROWUPOTANA ORGANIZER (38).

4. ALTHOUGH THE ELECTION HAD ELEMENTS OF A POPULARITY
CONTEST (THE POLL WAS HELD WITH NO NOTICE TO AVOID
"CANVASSING" FOR VOTES), THE RESULTS CONTAIN SOME INTERESTING
INDICATIONS OF THE DIRECTION AND INTENTIONS
OF THE PARTY. THE ROLE OF 35-YEAR OLD GAMINI DISSANAYAKE
AS A LEADER OF FIRST RANK AND A POTENTIAL PARTY HEAD IS
CONFIRMED. THERE IS SOME CALCULATED BALANCING APPARENT
IN THE LIST. K.W. DEVANAYAGAM IS THE ONLY SITTING TAMIL
UNP M.P. AND THUS AN OBVIOUS CHOICE AS THE REPRESENTATIVE
OF HIS COMMUNITY. A. C. S. HAMEED IS THE REQUISITE MOSLEM,
ALTHOUGH HE IS ALSO A RESPECTED AND SENIOR PARLIAMENTARIAN.
LALITH ATHULATHMUDALI IS THE MOST PROMINENT NEWCOMER
TO THE ELECTION SCENE AND HAS BEEN IMPORTANT BACKSTATE
IN DRAFTING THE UNP MANIFESTO.

5. THE MOST INTERESTING FEATURE OF THE LIST IS THE
PEOPLE IT DOES NOT CONTAIN. PASSED OVER IN THE VOTING
WERE FOUR MINISTERS OF THE LAST UNP GOVERNMENT (1965-70)-- M.D.
H. JAYAWARDENA, MONTAGUE JAYAWICKREME, M.H.
MOHAMED, AND ASOKA KARUNARATNE. THEY WILL ALL BE
RUNNING FOR ELECTION THIS YEAR BUT THEIR REJECTION BY
THEIR MOSTLY YOUNGER PEERS INDICATES THAT THEY MAY NOT
HAVE THE LEADERSHIP ROLE THEY WERE ANTICIPATING. THEIR
ABSENCE FROM THE ELECTION COMMITTEE IS A SIGN THAT
SOME OF THE PARTY AT LEAST IS SERIOUS ABOUT THEIR
LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 03 COLOMB 00382 311231Z

PROCLAIMED ATTEMPTS TO FORM A "NEW" UNP. HOWEVER,
J.R. ,IF HE SHOULD BECOME PRIME MINISTER, MIGHT NOT BE
SO QUICK TO PASS OVER HIS FORMER COLLEAGUES WHEN CHOOSING A
CABINET.

6. ONE RATIONALE FOR THE UNUSUAL PROCESS OF ELECTING
SUCH A COMMITTEE MAY HAVE BEEN TO BRIGHTEN UP THE
DEMOCRATIC IMAGE OF J.R. HE HAS BEEN STUNG BY CRITICISM
OF WHAT SOME POLITICAL OPPONENTS HAVE TERMED HIS
"DICTATORIAL" TENDENCIES.

7. EMBASSY WILL BE FORWARDING BIOGRAPHIC INFORMATION ON THSE
AND OTHER UNP LEADERS.
REED

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: SHADOW CABINET, PARTY LEADERS, ELECTION CANDIDATES
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 31-Jan-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1977COLOMB00382
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D770033-1034
Format: TEL
From: COLOMBO
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1977/newtext/t1977014/aaaaactw.tel
Line Count: 111
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 67ffa2d4-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION NEA
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 23-Feb-2005 12:00:00 am
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 3565570
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: UNITED NATIONAL PARTY SELECTS ELECTION COMMITTEE/SHADOW CABINET
TAGS: PINT, PINR, CE, UNP, (JAYEQARDENE, J R)
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/67ffa2d4-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
22 May 2009
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009